

## The Honolulu Sailor's Home

B. Jean Martin and Frances Jackson

### BACKGROUND

The concept of Sailors' Homes in foreign ports was one aspect of the Great Revival of the late 18th and early 19th Centuries in Christian Europe and the United States. The Word of God was to be brought to the heathen of the world. Equally importantly, the Word of God should be available to civilized seamen who found themselves in heathen lands. The enthusiasm of the Great Revival sent waves of missionaries to Africa, the Near East, Asia, the American frontiers, and the Pacific Ocean.

In Hawai'i this Great Revival enthusiasm found a fertile field for conversions. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) sent out its first company of Protestant missionaries in 1819. The same year saw the start of the Pacific whaling industry with vast fleets of whalers stopping at Hawaiian ports—mainly Honolulu and Lāhainā—during their twice-a-year visits to provision.

The American Seamen's Friend Society (ASFS) of New York, organized in May 1828, though not officially incorporated until 22 April 1833, in 1832 sent the Rev. John Diell to Hawai'i as its first chaplain to the port of Honolulu.<sup>1</sup> He constructed a two story chapel for his Seamen's Bethel on a lot given by Kamehameha III. By 5 January 1835 it had a bell in its steeple, a New Year's gift from "Shipmasters and foreigners," which served until the 1886 fire destroyed the Bethel. Poor health forced Diell to leave Hawai'i, and he died at sea in 1841.

His replacement, Rev. Samuel C. Damon, arrived late in 1842. He found a growing potential congregation. Throughout the 1840s

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there averaged over 400 ships in port each whaling season, with a record high of over 600 in 1846. Damon's report from Honolulu in 1851 recorded the visits of 558 whaleships and barks, 27 brigs, and 35 schooners, bringing approximately 15,000 men into the port during the year.<sup>2</sup> Most of them came ashore for recreation of one kind or another. Women and drink figured heavily in this recreation, and overnight accommodations were more often than not the local lockup. Riots over seamen's activities ashore were common; a nasty one took place in Lāhainā in the 1820s when the chiefs, at missionary behest, prohibited women and alcohol to visiting seamen and, on another occasion a few years later, seamen retaliated by shelling Lāhainā town. Yet another riot was triggered in 1852 by the death of a seaman in the lockup in Honolulu following an exchange of bricks and blows.

Seamen brought ashore more than just their earnings, which in a good year might total over \$120,000. In 1853 they brought smallpox, and the resulting epidemic infected 6,405 and killed 2,485 Island residents. These were the official figures; health officials of the time believed that for every known death there were two others unreported, for a loss of as many of 6,000 of the Islands' population.

By early 1854 the epidemic had peaked. Although Honolulu did not yet know it, so had whaling; it was to continue a steady decline until 1871, when an early freeze in the North Pacific whaling grounds trapped and destroyed most of the remaining whaleships.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1854-1860: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HONOLULU SAILOR'S HOME

In mid 1854 a Captain Elliot, shipmaster of a vessel then in port and a local preacher of the Methodist Church, gave a sermon at the Honolulu Seamen's Bethel in which he touched upon the New York Sailor's Home and its activities.<sup>4</sup> In the June issue of *The Friends*, editor Samuel Damon began advocating such a home for the seamen who called at Honolulu.<sup>5</sup> This was well within the charge of the American Seamen's Friend Society, whose charter included among its other objectives, "the promoting in every port of boarding-houses of good character," along with savings banks, register offices, libraries, museums, reading rooms, and schools.<sup>6</sup> A series of public meetings during November, announced by handbill, led to a resolution, a committee to raise \$20,000 by subscription for the construction of a Sailor's Home in Honolulu, and a petition to the Minister of Interior asking for a plot of ground on which to build. On 20 November 1854 the petition was presented to the Privy Council

which granted a lot on the corner of Merchant and Bethel Streets, adjacent to the Seamen's Bethel. One of the last public acts of King Kamehameha III (he died on December 15), this generosity prompted one Boston supporter to exult, "Surely Kings have become Nursing Fathers."<sup>7</sup>

The Privy Council made the offer conditional:

. . . no intoxicating liquors shall be drunk on the premises; no women of lewd character be admitted; no gambling allowed, nor any other disorder tolerated. This resolution shall not be binding on the King's Government unless the sum of Five Thousand Dollars be raised by subscription for the purpose aforesaid, within twelve months, and on the further condition that such Sailor's Home shall be equally available to Sailors of all nations, including those of this Kingdom,—and when said lot ceases to be used for the purpose of a Sailor's Home, the same shall revert to the Government.<sup>8</sup>

On the same evening of 20 November 1854 the leaders of the still unofficial Honolulu Sailor's Home Society met, adopted a constitution, elected trustees and officers, and established standing committees.<sup>9</sup> These leaders saw a separate society to operate their Honolulu Home, rather than merely a committee of the American Seamen's Friend Society, as was outlined in its Constitution and By Laws and under which the New York Home was operated. Apparently there was also some concern over the arrangements between the ASFS and the New York Sailor's Home. Some time before October 1855, Damon asked Thomas V. Sullivan, of the Boston Office Marine Missions, for information "regarding the terms of agreement between the Am. S.F. Society and the Keeper of the Sailor's Home in N.York." This information was solicited by Sullivan from Rev. C.J. Jones of the New York Seamen's Bethel, who was cautioned not to talk about the request and advised that his information would be used "in confidence without your name." Jones replied to Damon on October 19, giving details of the New York Home which was giving "universal dissatisfaction" in large part because the Keeper was running it for profit. "Do not," wrote Rev. Jones, "let any man have the Sailor's Home in Honolulu as a money making concern. The seamen see such things & they place a proper estimate on the efforts of a man in such a position."<sup>10</sup>

In May 1855 the Society was incorporated as an eleemosynary institution under Hawaiian law so that it could hold the Deed of Gift to the land. Its stated purpose was:

. . . improving the social, moral and religious condition of seamen, resorting to this port, by the establishment and maintenance of a Home of good character, from which all intoxicating liquor shall be excluded, and by such other means as shall be deemed proper.

The initial 18 trustees were incorporated to receive and hold lands and other valuables for the purpose and object of establishing and maintaining a Sailor's Home. Dues were set at one dollar annually, or \$50 for life members. There was to be an elected board of 18 trustees who were to serve staggered terms but who could succeed themselves. The Board also nominated its successors. It was to set its own meetings and to keep regular minutes of the proceedings. Ten were required for a quorum, and only two thirds of the trustees present at any meeting duly called were necessary to convey real estate. Finally, there was to be no personal liability for Society debts.<sup>11</sup>

Meanwhile, the committee to solicit contributions, consisting of shipowners Captains Elliot, Neal, and Walker, and townsmen John Ii, William H. Johnson, and Samuel N. Castle, immediately went to work.<sup>12</sup> The first donation toward the new Home, 50 cents, came from "an American Sailor, the son of a Quaker residing in New York," never cited by name.<sup>13</sup> By April of 1855 the Privy Council's conditional \$5,000 had been raised,<sup>14</sup> and "builders and contractors" (there were as yet no architects in Honolulu) were asked to submit proposals for constructing a building to the specifications provided by the Society.<sup>15</sup> C.W. Vincent was the successful applicant. Of the \$8,575 expended on putting up the Home, \$4,750 came from the "benevolent resources of the Honolulu Community,"<sup>16</sup> another \$850 from Boston (much of it through the efforts of James Hunnewell, who for some reason had no luck at all in New Bedford),<sup>17</sup> \$1,000 from "seafaring people," and a final \$1,000 from the rent of the cellar, leaving a balance due of \$975. Another \$5,000 was needed to furnish the place and erect the necessary outbuildings.<sup>18</sup>

To meet this need, "An Appeal to Ship Masters, Officers, and Seamen" was initiated in the fall of 1855. Printed forms explaining the Home and having spaces to list contributors and their gifts were to be presented to incoming vessels, by, among others, the Honolulu Harbor Master who was also a trustee of the Home.<sup>19</sup>

As well as direct donations, Honolulu's "benevolent resources" were tapped through fairs, concerts, and other public events "for the Benefit of the Sailor's Home." In 1855 a committee to solicit contributions, consisting of Carmen R. V. de Everett, Maria L. Hoffman, and Martha T.J. Marshall, extracted a lengthy list of donations, to the value of \$1,092.37, for a Fair held on 16 November 1855. The list of donors includes the names of nearly every American, European, and Chinese merchant in Honolulu, whose contributions included clothes, perfumes, "segars," food, and books, including

among several authored by "Beecher," one whose title was given as "Uncle Tom."<sup>20</sup> This event realized \$1,713.57. The next week, on 21 November, Lee and Marshall's National Circus offered a Benefit for the Home which netted \$354.75.<sup>21</sup>

The next year a Picnic commemorating the opening of the Home in September brought in another \$120. In December Rowe and Smith's Pioneer Circus offered a Benefit aboard the ship *Pioneer*, and three days later there was a Benefit Concert at the Court House which was rumored to have raised over \$300. No prices were given for the concert, but admission to both circuses were Dress Circle \$1.50, Box & Parquette \$1, and Pit \$.50. How these distinctions were established aboard ship is not given.<sup>22</sup>

The new King, Kamehameha IV, at the invitation of Damon and the Home trustees, laid the cornerstone for the Home with "appropriate ceremonies" on Restoration Day, 31 July 1855,<sup>23</sup> complete with a daguerreotype by Mr. Antrim, taken from an upstairs window of the *Polynesian* across the street; and in October of that year the Reading Room was opened for public use, stocked largely by local donations of recent papers and periodicals (fig. 1). By 1857 the Reading Room had been supplemented by the Hawaiian Marine Circulating Library, sometimes called the Book Depository, the project of Thomas V. Sullivan of the Office Marine Missions of Boston, who envisioned both a Honolulu reading room and a series of circulating libraries to be placed aboard whaleships away at sea.<sup>24</sup>

The Hawaiian Kingdom fulfilled its part of the bargain by transferring the Bethel Street lot to the Society as Royal Patent Grant 1893, dated 27 December 1855. Furnishing the rest of the building and getting it ready for occupancy was a slower process, for the trustees were determined to incur no heavy debt but to hold to a "pay-as-you-go" policy. A part of those needed furnishings came from local and New England benevolent associations, including the Ladies Seamen's Friend Societies of Falmouth, New London, and Lynn, and the native female Benevolent Society of Hāmākua and Waimea, Hawai'i, some of which undertook to furnish an entire room at the Home with curtains, linens, and bedding. Plaques named each room and identified the donors thereof. By the second meeting of the Society, on 17 November 1856, only a small debt of \$422.94 remained.<sup>25</sup>

Damon's May 1856 Report before the Hawaiian Evangelical Association was relatively hopeful:

It is the expectation of the Trustees to put the building ready for occupancy the coming fall. The grand desideratum has not yet been secured. I mean a good man, with a family, has not yet been found to keep it.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, Thomas Thrum Sr. and wife, lately arrived from Australia, were hired as managers, and on 11 September 1856, barely two years after the first call for such a facility, the Honolulu Sailor's Home opened its doors for inspection. Reported the *Polynesian*:

... if the house is ever again so full of merry laughter and innocent enthusiasts, it may congratulate itself upon being the scene of a second triumph. ... If ever an institution was introduced to public notice under happy patronage it is the Sailor's Home. Long may it flourish.<sup>27</sup>

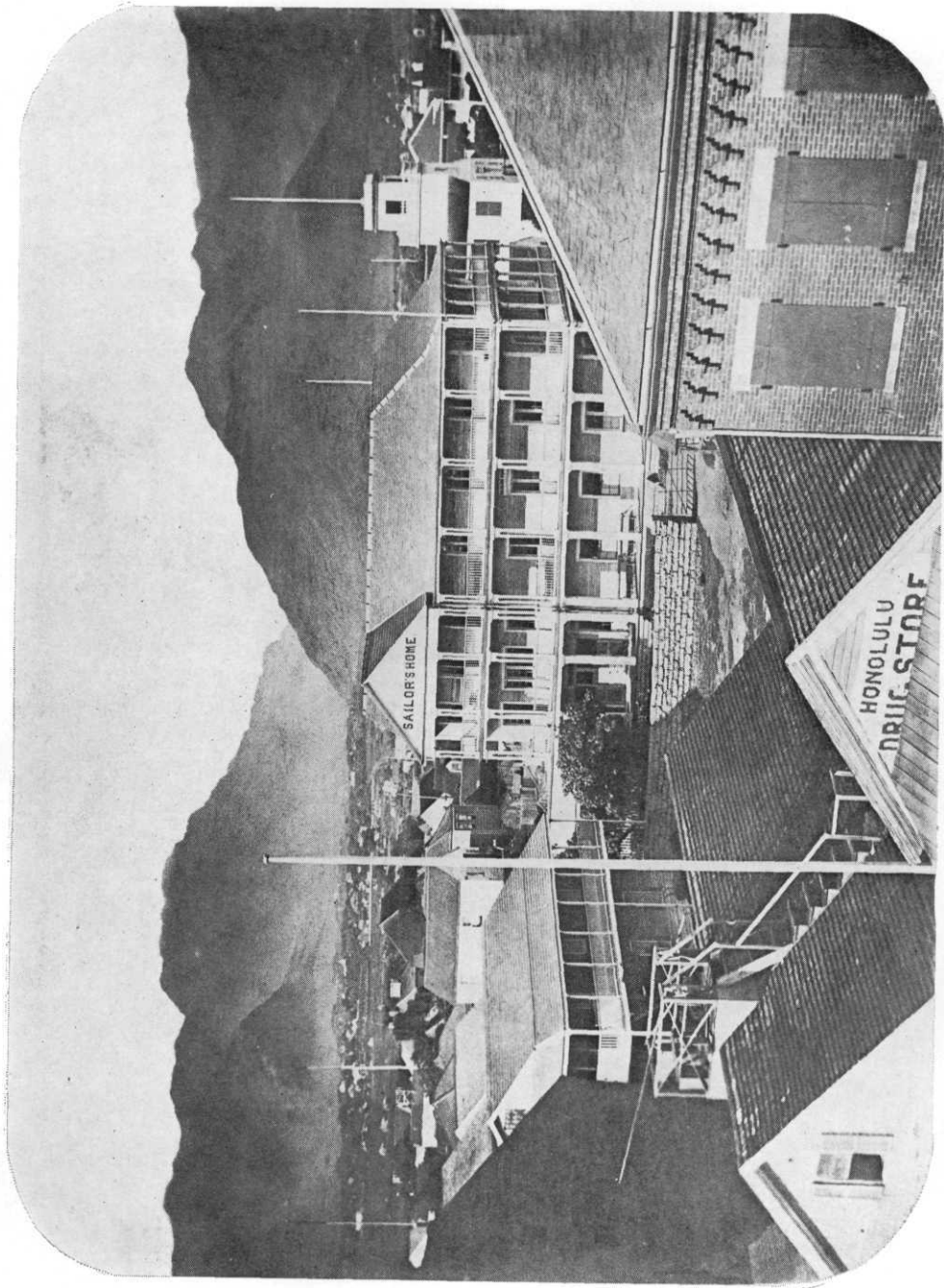
The popularity of the Home was immediately apparent. Accommodations had been provided for 50 men, but during November 1856 occupancy averaged 75 boarders in residence. To meet the need, Thrum expanded the Home to 74 beds the next year.<sup>28</sup> A brief report covering 1 September through 31 December 1856 showed 272 boarders who paid \$2,088.50, plus additional income of \$465.62 from sale of coffee, soup, soda water, and meals to those not also boarding. Another \$210 was still due from debtors for a total of \$2,554.12 of income against \$2,304.12 in expenses. Another 261 names, some with notes such as "from the wreck of the British ship Edward," are listed as boarded in the home from 1 February 1857 to January 1858.<sup>29</sup> That second year Manager Thrum also initiated a free safety deposit service for seamen's earnings and provided a hiring hall, or "shipping office," something which had been specifically requested by visiting seamen. The Home was repainted in 1859, and by September 1862 it was advertising "Shower Baths on the Premises." In keeping with the intent of the Society, as well as with common practice in Honolulu at the time, lodging was provided free to those boarding at the Home. For these services seamen, who lodged on the upper floor, paid \$5, while officers, quartered on the lower floor, were seated at private tables for \$6 per week.<sup>30</sup>

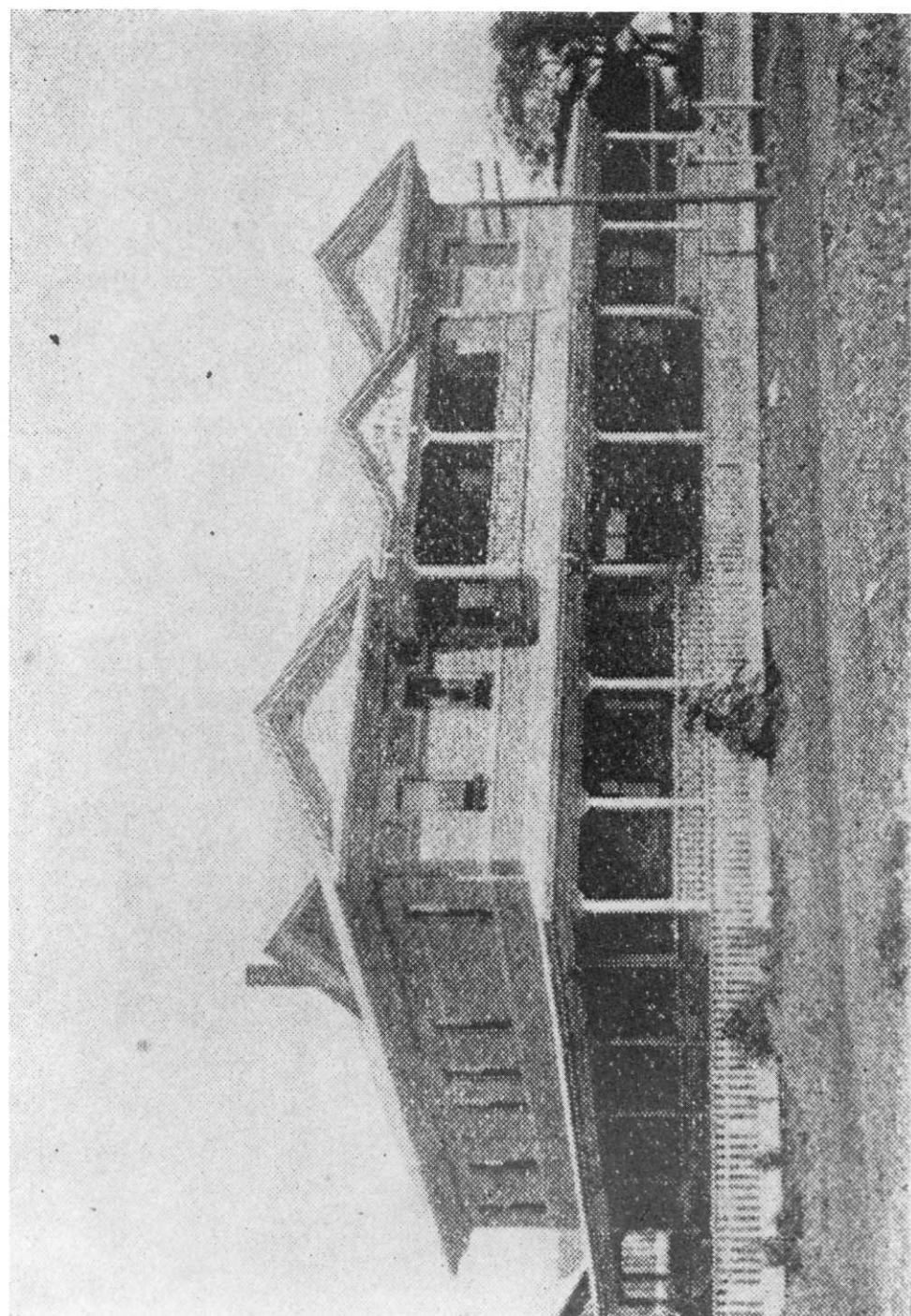
"Was the Home needed in Honolulu?" asked Damon rhetorically the month the new Home opened. "During several years past," he wrote, "from three to five thousand seamen have been annually discharged at this port, and more than twice that number visited the port but remained undischarged. Those discharged usually have remained on shore from one to five or six weeks." Boarding houses

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FIG. 1. The Sailor's Home, 1850s. (Hugo Stangenwald photo, HMCS Library photo.)









were generally poor, and some seamen merely camped in native huts. House rents were high and "the shipping season lasting but a few months of the year, together with numerous other hindrances, prevented persons from engaging in the business." Worse, some seamen left without paying their bills. While the new Home could not possibly accommodate all seaman, "We shall be much surprised if those lodging elsewhere are not better off than they would have been if no Home had been established."<sup>31</sup> In September 1856 the Home still owed about \$1500; this had been cleared by December 1860 when the Home was declared "out of debt."<sup>32</sup>

As the decade advanced, the Home continued to operate, serving fewer whaling men but ever increasing numbers of merchant seamen and the crews of men-of-war. The overall decrease in use, however, prompted some to consider turning back the charter, to which Damon replied:

In moral and benevolent point of view it has always been a paying institution. . . . Notwithstanding the falling off in the large number of seamen who formerly visited Honolulu, still the present number is very considerable, and it is hoped will always be such as shall call for the maintenance of the Home.

Others asked why the Home was not financially self-sufficient:

As a mere boarding house, the Home has not incurred any debts & no appeals made to make up losses in the boarding department. Those who have the Home have never been charged any rent and have never called upon the Trustees to make up losses.

It was the Managers, contracted to operate the boarding department, who had suffered the losses:

We are able to state exactly what these losses have been. During the five seasons that Mr. & Mrs. Thrum carried on the Home, i.e., from September 1856, to January 1861, they lost by bad debts, and money advanced to boarders the large sum of thirteen hundred & twenty-four dollars and seventy five cents (\$1,324.75) or nearly 10 per cent upon all their bills.

Even if they had received this amount and met with no other losses, they still would not have made anything more than a fair living in the Home. Although it was never designed to make the place a money making concern, its prosperity and success, Damon continued, demanded that the managers of the boarding department shall be able to secure an honest living.<sup>33</sup>

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FIG. 2. The new Sailor's Home, in *The Friend* of April 1895. (HMCS Library photo.)

The trustees, in keeping with their constitution, undertook to provide for the building, its furnishings, the reading room, and a family to manage the Home. Any small debts, usually less than \$100, outstanding on these responsibilities, including refurbishing and repainting the building, were usually covered by donations from trustees made at the time of the annual meetings. The Society contracted with the managers to provide and maintain the boarding department, for which the trustees took no responsibility. For several years these managers had been losing money, receiving from the trustees only the acknowledgment that by absorbing such losses, they were among the larger "contributors" to the Home.<sup>34</sup> It is not clear from the surviving records how the managers made a living, much less covered these continuing debts.

#### 1860-1874: CONSULAR RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE SAILOR'S HOME

The notable event in this period of the Home's existence was its new relationship with the U.S. Consulate. Consuls traditionally were charged with looking after the interests of destitute, sick, or otherwise needy seamen who were either citizens or serving aboard ships of their respective nations. Board, lodging, clothing, medical care, and burial expenses were due eligible seamen. For merchant seamen of the United States, by 1867 at least, money for these services came from a Marine Fund made up of deductions from their pay. The Fund was apparently supplemented by direct appropriations from the Congress. Whalemen did not pay into this Marine Fund and so were not eligible for certain amenities paid out of it, a situation leading to strong protests on their behalf by Rev. Damon.<sup>35</sup> They worked for "lays" or percentages of the catch, paid at the end of the voyage. In addition, when sick or disabled, discharged or disgruntled, the whalemen were to be paid an extra three months "wages" by the ship, plus 20¢ per month at sea, to be held by the consul. Such wages were calculated at an arbitrary \$12 per month, until 1868 when they were raised to \$20 at Honolulu. A well man received \$24 (later \$40) of this when shipping out again, less any board bills which had to be paid on his account, and the remaining \$12 (later \$20) went into a "Relief" fund. For a sick man, the entire \$36 (later \$60) was held by the consul to pay hospital bills. When that sum was exhausted, the consul dipped into the "Relief" fund, and any extra expenses incurred were charged to the government. These discharge wages were also subject to a five percent commission for

the consul for his work.<sup>36</sup> Opportunities for misappropriation of funds were legion.

At the height of the whaling era Hawaiian posts were the most eagerly contested in the whole of the American consular corps, and the reason was simple—at the Islands a man might make his fortune in the service of his country. . . . Towards the end of the eighteenth-fifties . . . relief of seamen in the Hawaiian Islands was costing more than \$150,000 a year—more than half the sum appropriated for the relief of American Sailors all over the world.<sup>37</sup>

The Honolulu Sailor's Home had always catered to seamen of all nations who were on the beach and able to pay their own way. In addition, consuls for other nations sent their able-bodied but destitute charges to the Home for board and lodging. U.S. Consul Alfred Caldwell did not; he could make more by contracting for sick and well men at a variety of other establishments around Honolulu. In 1867 Thomas F. Wilson was sent out as consular clerk to investigate charges of hospital abuse in Honolulu for the Department of State. He promptly charged his superior, Consul Caldwell, with "wrongfully allowing" certain relief funds to be expended, and Caldwell was recalled. When Caldwell left Honolulu, the U.S. diplomatic officer, on instructions from Washington, elevated Wilson to acting consul.<sup>38</sup> In this new capacity he inquired of the Honolulu Sailor's Home Society, as well as other establishments, if they could provide services for both sick and able-bodied, destitute seamen at their respective institutions. The Home quoted its current fees for the able-bodied, still the original rate, but could not care for the sick and disabled. Other institutions, therefore, continued to be used, and the Home received no U.S. Consular business.<sup>39</sup> Throughout this crisis, Damon wrote articles, petitioned Washington, and otherwise acted for distressed seamen, noting that sick whalers had already paid into the Relief Fund and were therefore not paupers, and that the sick should be separated from the well by sending the former to hospitals and the latter to the Home.

Finally, in 1869, Thomas Adamson, Jr., a Philadelphia merchant who had served for seven years in South America as a U.S. Consul, agreed to accept the Honolulu consular post to try to resolve the continuing difficulties. He reported on his investigations of Honolulu hospitals and sailors' boarding houses in a despatch to Secretary of State Hamilton Fish in September of that year:

. . . and in the Sailor's Home found the very best of the kind I have ever seen. These rooms are better furnished than the average of sleeping apartments in the best hotels in Washington. The upper floor, and because of its height from the ground the most pleasant

part of the house, is apportioned to mates and common sailors. Knowing well how miserable are the accommodations generally given to seamen in the standard "sailor's boarding house" I could scarcely credit it when I was told these rooms are allotted to ordinary seamen. Here was really good neat bedsteads, free from vermin, with straw beds, spotless sheets, white counterpanes and convenient mosquito netting! and all these with good substantial board at \$5 per week for sailors, \$6 per week for officers and \$8 (lower rooms) for captains. The latter are equal in every respect to rooms at private boarding homes costing \$16 per week. The Sailor's Home is kept by Mrs. R. O. Crabb, the widow of an officer of U.S. Marines who is devoting her life to the amelioration of the sailor's lot . . . I believe that none of the missionaries are doing more good here and are not so thoroughly disinterested as this noble woman who by her motherly and winning manner quiets the rough sons of Neptune and brings back to mind the remembrance of a loving mother's good advice and watchful care. All of the foreign consulates at Honolulu, excepting this, send the seamen under their charge to the "Home."<sup>40</sup>

As a result, Adamson was authorized to temporarily send sick patients to Dr. McGrew's hospital while the whaling season was on and Adamson's preferred hospital, Queen's, was full; the able-bodied, destitute seamen went to the Honolulu Sailor's Home. Fees for their board and lodging were to be at the same low rate established by the Trustees of the Home in 1856, to be paid by the U.S. Consul. Adamson himself saw to it their clothing needs, another area ripe with graft, were met economically.<sup>41</sup> Damon's petitions had finally been answered.

The Society's 28th Annual Report, for 1883, suggests yet another source of income for the Home and gives a picture of its operations:

Not only does the Home furnish a place of shelter for seamen sent here by the various consuls to be boarded until they can ship or be sent to California, but the Home is a place of constant resort for laborers passing through Honolulu who are attached to plantations. Here they come to lodge and deposit their chests and trunks. . . . More or less of this class of laborers are constantly at the Home. During the past years, plantation agents have sent whole families hither until they could be forwarded to their places of destination. Hence, the Sailor's Home has become what they style in England a "Strangers Rest."<sup>42</sup>

#### 1886-1896: FIRE AND RELOCATION

The Great Chinatown Fire of 18 April 1886 destroyed 30 acres of property, including the Honolulu Seamen's Bethel. The wood-frame Sailor's Home next door, shielded by trees, survived the fire but lost most of its outbuildings.<sup>43</sup> Capt. C. Brewer, of Boston, had presented the Sailor's Home with one of the "justly celebrated fire extinguishing machines" for which C. Brewer & Co. were Honolulu agents, reported *The Friend* in June 1869. With one of these machines on hand, the Home reported itself almost as safe from fire as any fire proof establishment in town. But it was no match against such a

conflagration, and "Injured beyond repair," the Home was soon deemed a menace, and fire-conscious community leaders urged its destruction.<sup>44</sup> The building and its furnishings went up for auction in early October, and demolition work began soon after.<sup>45</sup>

The Society's Royal Patent Grant for the land required that it be used as a Sailor's Home, but after demolition there would no longer be a Home on the lot and the land could revert to the Hawaiian Government. Society and Government representatives met through the summer to work out the problems. As had occurred earlier with the governments of Kamehameha III and IV, that of Kalākaua (and later that of Lili'uokalani and the post-revolution Provisional Government, as well) were prepared to support the Honolulu Sailor's Home with a grant of land on which to build it.

On 7 October 1886 it was mutually agreed that: it would be expedient to build on a smaller scale; the new building would be fireproof; and the Society would be responsible for the demolition of the building still standing on Bethel Street. For its part, the Government would match \$5,000, if the Society could raise that much over the next five years. In addition, the Society agreed to quitclaim to the Government one half of the Bethel Street lot for the planned widening of Bethel Street, one of the post-fire downtown improvements.<sup>46</sup>

Four years later, on 17 March 1890, per Royal Patent Grant 3474, the Society exchanged its remaining half of the Bethel Street lot "for a new lot on the Esplanade" at Alakea and Halekauwila Streets.<sup>47</sup> Two years after that, on 25 August 1892, Queen Lili'uokalani and the legislature authorized the transfer to the Society of the lot adjoining to the east at Halekauwila and Richards Streets;<sup>48</sup> on 23 March 1893 the Provisional Government completed conveyance of this lot.<sup>49</sup>

Six competitive bids for a new Honolulu Sailor's Home on the Alakea Street lot were received in early 1891.<sup>50</sup> C.B Ripley submitted the winning design, and the structure was built by a Mr. Lucas at a cost of \$21,990<sup>51</sup> or \$24,990,<sup>52</sup> depending on the informant. It opened "unostentatiously" early in 1895 (fig. 2). Harbor improvements had not yet added new land at this site, and high tide still came up almost to the *makai* side of the lot.

Between 1887 and 1895, while the new Alakea Street Home was being financed and built, consuls had to board men elsewhere around town. A Young Men's Christian Association had started in Honolulu and, until it had a building of its own, operated the Bethel Street

Sailor's Home Reading Room.<sup>53</sup> After the fire the "Y" facility became the preferred location for seamen wanting a wholesome Christian environment.

The new Alakea Street Sailor's Home apparently operated from 1895 to 1907 under the same arrangements that had prevailed at the old Home: that is, trustees were directly responsible for the physical building, its furnishings, and the Reading Room, but contracted with managers to operate the (free?) lodging and to provide board. Any profit to the managers presumably came from the board operations.

#### 1907-1943: THE HONOLULU SEAMEN'S INSTITUTE

The Honolulu Seamen's Institute, later to become the Honolulu Seamen's Church Institute, was established in 1902 by Episcopalian Bishop of California, the Rt. Rev. William Ford Nichols (in Honolulu briefly for the transfer of jurisdiction of the Church in Hawai'i from English to American Church rule),<sup>54</sup> with the aid of T. Clive Davies, Theo H. Davies heir. Both men were familiar with the work of the British Missions to Seamen Society, an active group with facilities around the world,<sup>55</sup> and wanted something similar in Honolulu.

This Seamen's Institute, with its Episcopal Church orientation, was the philosophical successor to the earlier American Seamen's Friend Society which had sent the Congregationalist ministers John Diell and Samuel Damon as chaplains to the Honolulu Seamen's Bethel. After Damon's death in 1885 no one, from any denomination, was sent as replacement chaplain for seamen's concerns in Honolulu, and until the Episcopal church "became interested in it," that work was done by volunteers.

On 31 January 1907 the Honolulu Seamen's Institute and the Honolulu Sailor's Home Society agreed to join forces. Both groups drew financial support from the same people, to do the same work. The Honolulu Sailor's Home Society only slightly enlarged its usual operational contract to run the Home when they agreed to lease the property to the Seamen's Institute "for a nominal sum." In return, the Seamen's Institute would "carry on its work and that of the Home."

On 23 April 1913, by Act of the Territorial Legislature, the Society's Articles of Incorporation were amended to reduce the number of trustees from the original 18 to six. All other provisions remained the same.<sup>56</sup>



Although the Honolulu Seamen's Institute and the Honolulu Sailor's Home retained separate boards of trustees, these grew to be increasingly overlapping as the years passed. By the 1930s meetings of the two boards occurred simultaneously, and frequently the same four men made up the executive committees of the two organizations. From the limited information available at this time, it is not clear what the financial arrangements were between the two societies during this time period.

Funding for the Home continued to come from private subscriptions and fees. After 1919 about one half of its expenses were met with funds from the United Welfare Campaign; the Home was once more caring for destitute seamen. After 1935, when it was apparently determined by community welfare agencies that all relief work for seamen was to be done by the Society and/or Institute, the United Welfare Campaign dollars increased.<sup>57</sup>

#### 1943-1948: UNITED SEAMEN'S SERVICE YEARS

In mid 1943, for \$25 per year, the property was leased to the United Seamen's Service, Inc., for "the duration of the war and six months." The U.S.S. repaired the deteriorated facility, refurbished it, and, in October, opened for business as the "Merchant Seamen's Club." When first considered, it was expected that about 500 seamen per week would use the Club; as of May 1945 there were about 5,000 per day making use of the facilities there.

World War II brought one other change. The original land grants and deed provided that "no intoxicating liquor shall be allowed on the premises." On 5 August 1943 the Territorial Attorney General replied to an inquiry by the U.S.S. that, as long as he was in office, and short of flagrant abuse, there would be no attempt by his office to enforce the provisions, and, at least for the duration of the war, they could safely serve 3.2 beer at the Merchant Seamen's Club.<sup>58</sup>

The war was over in 1945, but the U.S.S. continued to operate the club until its funds ran out in 1948, and on August 17 it closed the Honolulu office.<sup>59</sup> The premises then reverted to the Honolulu Sailor's Home Society. At this point the Society either reinstated the old contract, or entered into another, with the Honolulu Seamen's Institute to again operate the Home.<sup>60</sup> Records are missing for this period, and no secondary sources have been located to fill the gap. From 1948 to 1959 both the building and seamen's services deteriorated almost to the point of nonexistence.

#### 1959: THE NEW BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Home was in miserable condition in April 1959 when a number of seamen paid their dues to become members of the Honolulu Sailor's Home Society. Port agents of several seamen's unions had become concerned over conditions at the Home and determined to remedy the situation. Along with encouraging seamen to join the Society, the port agents also asked Monsignor Matthew Francis Connolly, Chaplain of the Apostle Ship of the Sea, seamen's chapel in San Francisco, to come to Honolulu. They hoped he would help to stir up interest among seamen's unions pension fund directors in San Francisco, who might be willing to provide financing to clean up the facility. Monsignor Connolly had some harsh things to say about the state of affairs at the Home, including its being "not fit for a dog to live in," "a flophouse of the worst type," and a "dirty little cubbyhole."<sup>61</sup> Photographs taken in 1959 certainly confirm his opinions. Newspaper interviews with Connolly brought out that the Seafarers International Union of North America had the money and wanted to build a decent new Sailor's Home but could not get the incumbent trustees to act.<sup>62</sup>

By the time of the Annual Meeting of the Society on 18 September 1959, there were some 107 dues-paying members, of whom 48 answered the roll call. As no annual meeting had been held for several years, there were no minutes to read. Two incumbent trustees were present: President (since 1946) Stanley H.N. Waldron and Howard Crites (who resigned before the election of new trustees.) Six new trustees, all closely associated with seamen's unions or shipping, were elected.<sup>63</sup> There was no indication of what had become of the other Sailor's Home Society trustees or of the Seamen's Institute trustees and membership.

The new trustees of the Honolulu Sailor's Home Society immediately constituted themselves a Building Committee and began negotiations with potential funding sources, primarily the various seamen's unions. However, since no income base was available to the Society with which to repay any loans from pension funds, this option was not economically feasible. The Alakea Street facility had deteriorated beyond repair, and by late 1961 demolition of the 70 year old Honolulu Sailor's Home-Merchant Seamen's Club had begun.<sup>64</sup>

After seven years of intensive negotiations with three successive private investor groups, the trustees' Building Committee was finally

able to put together a viable economic package. Because of the Royal Patent Grant restrictions and because the Society was an eleemosynary institution chartered by the Monarchy and Territorial Governments, any action taken by the trustees regarding commercial development was subject to review and approval by the courts. In March 1966 court approval was given for construction of a new five-story Sailor's Home,<sup>65</sup> funded by private capital and with an income base from commercial development with which to carry on the Society's work as set forth in its charter.

One other legal obstacle remained to be cleared away. The "no intoxicating liquors" clause had to be reviewed and its effect on the proposed commercial development clarified. It was determined that the Halekauwila and Richard Street lot, from Lili'uokalani and, later, the Provisional Government, would be given a waiver of this restriction, and any commercial development would take place on this lot only. The restriction would continue to apply to the lot covered by Royal Patent Grant 3474.

Thus, the new Honolulu Sailor's Home at 707 Alakea Street opened with appropriate ceremony on Friday, 2 July 1971. It continues to fulfill its purpose of "improving the social, moral and religious condition of seamen." It still provides rooms (but no boarding facilities) and a hiring hall, and it still adheres to the Privy Council's 1854 admonition:

... that no intoxicating liquors shall be drunk on the premises, no women of lewd character be admitted; no gambling allowed, nor any other disorder tolerated.

## NOTES

Much of the research for this article was undertaken at the request of the 1979 HSHS Board of Trustees, who recognized the paucity of material surviving in their own files and sought to recreate the earlier history of their Society. Some of the findings were published in 1979 as a Keepsake for the Society's 125th anniversary.

<sup>1</sup> *The Act of Incorporation, Constitution, and By Laws of the American Seamen's Friend Society* (New York: 1858), Samuel C. Damon papers (hereafter cited as SCD), box 10, file 4, HMCS. Among the founding trustees of the ASFS was Horace Holden, who after rescue from a South Seas shipwreck, relocated in Honolulu in 1839. Available records do not detail his role, if any, in the Honolulu operation of the ASFS.

<sup>2</sup> *F*, June 1933: 128.

<sup>3</sup> Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: UP of Hawaii, 1968) 76, 80, 138, 140, 167, and 172.

<sup>4</sup> *F*, Jan. 1856: 1. Damon and other contemporaries consistently used the form "Sailor's Home."

- <sup>5</sup> *F*, June 1854: 42.
- <sup>6</sup> *Act of Incorporation*. . . .
- <sup>7</sup> *P*, 18 Nov. 1854: 110; *P*, 25 Nov. 1854: 114; Thos. V. Sullivan, Office of Marine Missions, Boston, letter to S. C. Damon, Honolulu, 6 March 1855: SCD 3-7; Handbills, SCD 3-8.
- <sup>8</sup> *F*, 22 Nov. 1854: 82; *P*, 25 Nov. 1854: 114.
- <sup>9</sup> *P*, 25 Nov. 1854. The assignments were as follows: Hon. Elisha H. Allen, Pres.; G. P. Judd, V.P.; Wm. St. M. Bingham, Secty; G. M. Robertson, Treas.; Rev. S. C. Damon, Wm. H. Johnson, I. Bartlett, Exec. Committee. A "Floating Committee," made up of seafaring men wishing to be connected to the Society, included Captains Walker, Neal, Babcock, and Bennet. Trustees with three-year terms were: E. H. Allen, R. Armstrong, I. Bartlett, C. H. Butler, Wm. St. M. Bingham, S. N. Castle; with two-year terms: S. C. Damon, W. G. Davis, John 'I'i, G. B. C. Ingraham, W. H. Johnson, G. P. Judd; with one-year terms: W. L. Lee, W. Newcomb, G. M. Robertson, T. Spencer, J. T. Waterhouse, H. M. Whitney.
- <sup>10</sup> Thos. V. Sullivan, Office Marine Missions, Boston, letter to Rev. C. J. Jones, Sailor's Bethel, N.Y., 18 Oct. 1855, SCD 3-7.
- <sup>11</sup> *P*, 12 May 1855: 2.
- <sup>12</sup> *P*, 18 Nov. 1854: 110.
- <sup>13</sup> *P*, 10 March 1855: 174; *F*, Dec. 1857: 92.
- <sup>14</sup> *List of Subscribers to the Sailor's Home*, *P*, 7 April 1855: 191.
- <sup>15</sup> *F*, April 1855: 25.
- <sup>16</sup> S. C. Damon, Report before Hawaiian Evangelical Assn of May 1856, ms., SCD 10-4; *F*, Aug. 1856: 60-61.
- <sup>17</sup> *F*, Jan. 1856: 7.
- <sup>18</sup> *An Appeal to Ship Masters, Officers, and Seamen*, ([Honolulu]: 27 Sept. 1855), SCD 10-4.
- <sup>19</sup> *An Appeal* . . . ; *F*, Dec. 1857: 92.
- <sup>20</sup> Contributors of Articles for the Fair of the Sailors Home, 31 Oct. 1855, ms., SCD 10-4.
- <sup>21</sup> *P*, 24 Nov. 1855: 114; *P*, 13 Sept. 1856; *F*, Sept. 1856: 68. For the advent of the fair, see Helen G. Chapin and David W. Forbes, "The Folio of 1855—A Plea for Women's Rights," *H7H* 19 (1985): 122-133.
- <sup>22</sup> *F*, Dec. 1856: 91; SCD 3-3.
- <sup>23</sup> *P*, 4 Aug. 1855: 50; Invitation, 11 July 1855, SCD 3-7.
- <sup>24</sup> *F*, 25 Oct. 1855: 73; Thos. V. Sullivan, Office Marine Missions, Boston, letter to SCD, 6 March 1855, SCD 3-7. For a list of the books sent to the reading room see: Books Sent to the Hawn Marine Circulating Library, Boston, May 1855, ms., SCD 10-3, circular re: Library, SCD 10-4; *F*, 15 Nov. 1856: 81 and 87.
- <sup>25</sup> SCD 10-4; *F*, Aug. 1856: 60; *P*, Sept. 1856: 68; *F*, Dec. 1856: 89 and 90.
- <sup>26</sup> SCD 10-4.
- <sup>27</sup> *P*, 13 Sept. 1856: 75; *F*, Sept. 1856: 65; *F*, Nov. 1856: 84.
- <sup>28</sup> *F*, March 1857: 18; *F*, Aug. 1857: 61; *P*, 12 Sept. 1857: 148.
- <sup>29</sup> SCD 10-4; *F*, Dec. 1856: 89-90; *F*, Jan. 1857: 5.
- <sup>30</sup> *F*, Sept. 1856: 65.
- <sup>31</sup> *F*, Sept. 1856: 65; *F*, Dec. 1861: 93.
- <sup>32</sup> *F*, Dec. 1857: 92 and 94; *F*, March 1858: 20; *F*, Dec. 1858: 92; *F*, Dec. 1859: 90-91; *F*, Sept. 1860: 68; *F*, Dec. 1860: 92; *F*, Nov. 1861: 85.
- <sup>33</sup> *F*, Nov. 1861: 85; *F*, Dec. 1862: 93.

- <sup>34</sup> Annual Reports: *F*, Dec. 1862; *F*, Jan. 1864; *F*, Jan. 1864; *F*, Jan. 1865; *F*, Jan. 1867; *F*, Jan. 1868. Following the Thrums as managers were: Capt. and Mrs. Oat; in 1865, Mr. and Mrs. Miller; and in January 1867, due to failing health, the Millers sold out their interest to Mrs. Crabb and son.
- <sup>35</sup> *F*, Nov. 1861: 85; *F*, Feb. 1867: 9.
- <sup>36</sup> *F*, March 1867: 9-11 and 20.
- <sup>37</sup> Daws, *Shoal of Time* 170.
- <sup>38</sup> Despatches from U. S. Consuls in Honolulu, Caldwell to Department No. 1, 5 Jan. 1867; Wilson to Department No. 1, 2 Jan. 1867; Wilson to Department No. 6, 12 Jan. 1867, microfilm 559, roll 10, Hamilton Library, U of Hawai'i.
- <sup>39</sup> Despatches, roll 10, Wilson to Department No. 7, 12 Jan. 1867; *F*, March 1867: 9-11, 20-21; *F*, Aug. 1868, 65-66.
- <sup>40</sup> Despatches, roll 11, Adamson to Department No. 8, 10 Sept. 1869.
- <sup>41</sup> Despatches, roll 11, Adamson to Department No. 15, 25 Dec. 1869.
- <sup>42</sup> *F*, Jan. 1884: 6.
- <sup>43</sup> *HG*, 20 April 1886: 3.
- <sup>44</sup> *F*, Sept. 1886: 4.
- <sup>45</sup> *HG*, 5 Oct. 1886: 5.
- <sup>46</sup> Bureau of Conveyances, 7 Oct. 1886, book 100: 6.
- <sup>47</sup> Bureau of Conveyances, 27 March 1890, book 122: 273.
- <sup>48</sup> *Session Laws of 1892*, Oct. 31.
- <sup>49</sup> Bureau of Conveyances, 23 March 1893, book 142: 96.
- <sup>50</sup> *F*, March 1891: 21.
- <sup>51</sup> *HAA*, 1896: 54-55.
- <sup>52</sup> *F*, June 1933: 133.
- <sup>53</sup> Chieko Tachihata, "The History and Development of Hawaii Public Libraries," diss., U of Southern California, 1981, 28.
- <sup>54</sup> *The Episcopal Church in Hawaii: Ninety Years of Service, 1862-1952* (Honolulu: Protestant Episcopal Church, Missionary District of Honolulu, 1952) 20.
- <sup>55</sup> *F*, June 1933: 133.
- <sup>56</sup> *Session Laws of 1913*, Amended Act 109.
- <sup>57</sup> Minute Book, Honolulu Sailor's Home Society, 16 January 1931 to 12 April 1948, Honolulu Sailor's Home Society, Honolulu. This is the earliest surviving record still held by the HSHS.
- <sup>58</sup> H. L. Dawson, letter to J. Garner Anthony, and J. Garner Anthony, letter to H. L. Dawson, correspondence files, Honolulu Sailor's Home Society, Honolulu.
- <sup>59</sup> Minute Book, Honolulu Sailor's Home Society, 17 Aug. 1948.
- <sup>60</sup> Minutes end at the 17 August 1948 meeting, but since the facility continued to function it is presumed the Boards continued to meet and carry on the business of the Home.
- <sup>61</sup> *HA*, 25 July 1959: B4.
- <sup>62</sup> *HSB*, 29 July 1959: 7.
- <sup>63</sup> Minute Book, Honolulu Sailor's Home Society, 18 Sept. 1959.
- <sup>64</sup> *HA*, 22 Dec. 1961: B1.
- <sup>65</sup> *HA*, 25 March 1966: A14.